Evaluating Paragraph Unity

Unity: All sentences in a paragraph must be **unified** around a **controlling idea**. This controlling idea is written in a **topic sentence**. **Supporting sentences** add information to help the reader focus on the controlling idea.

**Activity**

Each of the following paragraphs contains sentences that are unhelpful or unnecessary to the main point of the paragraph. The sentences do not support the topic sentence, and so the paragraphs are not unified. Your job is to take out these unrelated sentences in order to make the paragraphs unified.

1st: Underline the topic sentence in each of the following paragraphs.

2nd: ~~Cross out~~ or highlight the unrelated sentences **AND** write

The numbers in the spaces provided.

\*\*\*HINT: The number of spaces will tell you the number of

unrelated sentences in each paragraph.

1. **How to Prevent Cheating**

**(1)** Teachers should take steps to prevent students from cheating on tests. **(2)** To begin with, teachers should stop reusing old tests. **(3)** Students will check with their friends to find out, for example, what was on Mr. Roe’s math test. **(4)** They may even manage to turn up a copy of the test itself, "accidentally" not turned in by a student of Mr. Roe’s. **(5)** Also, teachers must make it clear to students that there will be stiff penalties for cheating. **(6)** One of the problems with our school systems is a lack of discipline. **(7)** Teachers never used to give in to students' demands or put up with bad behavior, as they do today. **(8)** Anyone caught cheating should immediately receive a zero on the test. **(9)** A person even suspected of cheating should be forced to take an alternative exam in the teacher's office. **(10)** Because cheating is unfair to honest students, it should not be tolerated.

**The numbers of the unrelated sentences are** \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Why Adults Visit Amusement Parks**

**(1)** Adults visit amusement parks for several reasons. **(2)** For one thing, an amusement park is a place where it is acceptable to "pig-out" on junk food. **(3)** At the park, everyone is drinking soda and eating popcorn, ice-cream, or hot dogs. **(4)** No one seems to be on a diet, and so buying all the junk food you can eat is a guilt-free experience. **(5)** Parks should provide stands where healthier food, such as salads or cold chicken, would be sold. **(6)** Another reason people visit amusement parks is to prove themselves. **(7)** They want to visit the park that has the newest, scariest ride in order to say that they went on the Parachute Drop, the seven-story Elevator, the Water Chute, or the Death Slide. **(8)** Going on a scary ride is a way to feel courageous and adventurous without taking much of a risk. **(9)** Some rides, however, can be dangerous. **(10)** Rides that are not properly inspected or maintained have killed people all over the country. **(11)** A final reason people visit amusement parks is to escape from everyday pressures. **(12)** When people are poised at the top of a gigantic roller coaster, they are not thinking of bills, work, or personal problems. **(13)** A scary ride empties the mind of all worries--except making it to the bottom alive. **(14)** Adults at an amusement park may claim they have come for their children, but they are there for themselves, as well.

**The numbers of the unrelated sentences are** \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

3. **A Dangerous Cook**

**(1)** When my friend Tom sets to work in the kitchen, disaster often results. **(2)** Once he tried to make toasted cheese sandwiches for us by putting slices of cheese in the toaster along with the bread; he ruined the toaster. **(3)** Unfortunately, the toaster was a fairly new one that I had just bought for him three weeks before, on his birthday. **(4)** On another occasion, he had cut up some fresh beans and put them in a pot to steam. **(5)** I was really looking forward to the beans, for I eat nothing but canned vegetables in my dormitory. **(6)** I, frankly, am not much of a cook either. **(7)** The water in the Teflon pan steamed away while Tom was on the telephone, and both the beans and the Teflon coating in the pan were ruined. **(8)** Finally, another time Tom made spaghetti for us, and the noodles stuck so tightly together that we had to cut off slices with a knife and fork. **(9)** In addition, the meatballs were burned on the outside but almost raw on the inside. **(10)** The tomato sauce, on the other hand, turned out well. **(11)** For some reason, Tom is very good at making meat and vegetables sauces. **(12)** Because of Tom's kitchen mishaps, I never eat at his place without an Alka-Seltzer in my pocket or without money in case we have to go out to eat.

**The numbers of the unrelated sentences are** \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_